



MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE
PROCUREMENT

D/MIN/TT/12/3/2

Secretary of State

THE FALKLANDS - A FURTHER IGNORANT CONTRIBUTION

Of course a peaceful solution is the preferred choice, but I found myself ruminating last night on the crucial overlapping twin points of how total self-determination can be, and how could the situation be maintained if a military solution is adopted.

2. Obviously there are practical limitations the world over on self-determination, but realistic and perhaps even cynical politicians must not underestimate the importance of the principle. It is this principle that has secured in this case USA and European support. This principle is at stake in many other territories both of ours and of other people's and in small independent communities all over the world. What do we do about Gibraltar if we dent this principle other than for absolutely necessary, realistic practical reasons.

3. The practicality of the situation therefore overlaps with the principle and if we have thrown the Argies out and have no Argentine co-operation, what of the future? I believe the thinking which says that the Argentine would come back in again is false. No Argentine Government would risk a similar humiliation again, but hopefully even ^{AFTER} a military ^{SOLUTION} ~~situation~~ the USA might be persuaded to strengthen the guarantees for the future. They would not ^(ARGIES)

/ come ...

come in again but they would not co-operate with us or with the Falklands. You will have heard the detailed assessment as to how much this means, but I note that Chile has, in any event, been giving considerable logistic support to the Falklands in peacetime, and I have a feeling that it would not be very long before practical and not too expensive arrangements in default of Argentine co-operation could be made.

4. I realise that it is all enormously difficult, but my main point in writing is to say that I do not think the situation post a military solution will be as difficult as some are suggesting. This opinion, of course, goes hand in hand with my belief that a military solution will not be so difficult to achieve as the Force Commander appears to have said yesterday! Neither of these two points are intended to mean that I do not accept that there is a large premium to be placed on a peaceful solution if it can be obtained in a way which does not give away principles on which our international respect is currently based.

Tom

29th April 1982